1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

Opossum are sometimes required for ceremonial purposes. Large quantities of them must be caught before going out to cut the *pa'i* (ridge-poles) for the long house to be used at the *watawutf* ceremony. They are necessary also to the performance of one of the rain-making ceremonies, where they are offered to the *war*.

Iguana

Men and boys go to the bush and look until they find an iguana in a tree. Then one of the party climbs the tree and startles the animal, which probably either falls down or tries to escape; in either case it will be caught by other men waiting at the tree-foot. It is killed by blows from a stick.

I do not know of any magic connected with iguana hunting. Perhaps its absence, or relative unimportance, if it exists, may be explained by the fact that these creatures are not much desired as food, and are therefore but little sought after.

Birds

Birds are shot with bow and arrows, the latter being made of the mid-rib of the sago-palm leaf. The much larger and more elaborate arrows formerly used for war are now reserved for carrying at ceremonies, and are never used for hunting. But the same bow is used in both cases. Some of the little boys are very skilful in the use of these sago-palm leaf arrows.

Birds are also taken with nets. A man and a boy will go out before dawn; the man will climb a tree and stretch a net across it, keeping it taut by means of a stick. As the birds fly across it they are caught in its meshes, and the boy goes up and brings them down.

There is also a form of trap or snare used for taking birds. It is called *watsi*. I have not seen it in use, but two of the men constructed one in the village square for me to see how it was done (Fig. 11). Two sticks are placed upright on the ground, about 18 inches apart. A sapling is chosen, or put in on purpose, about 3 feet away from them. Its top is bent over, and a piece of fibre tied to it. At the other end of the piece of fibre a small twig is fastened. Two sticks are placed horizontally one above the other, passing from one of the uprights to the other. These are not fastened, but are held in place by the tension of the sapling pulling

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223 on the little twig which is placed against them, vertically, on the side away from the uprights. On the lower of these precariously held sticks there rest the ends of three horizontal sticks, the other ends of which rest on a log about a foot away, on that side of the uprights away from the saplings. A noose of fibre is laid on these three sticks, attached by a string to the small twig (the one attached by a string to the sapling) which keeps the two horizontals in position. Food is placed on or around these three sticks. If a bird

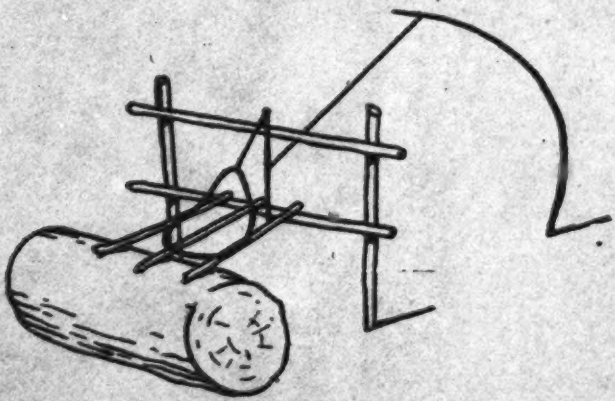

FIG. 11. Bird snare (*matsi*).

alights on them, its weight dislodges the lower of the two horizontal sticks, thus releasing the twig tied to the sapling, which flies back, pulling the noose with it, and the bird is caught in the tightened string of the noose.

Flying foxes, &c.

224 Flying foxes (*tsubak*) and other varieties of bats (*puputu*) are taken from the holes in the trees in which they hide during the day. Boys climb a tree with likely-looking holes in it, and feel inside for the creatures, which they pull out. Or they will search in the hollow of a large tree.

FISHING

226 Flesh food being none too plentiful, and at all times not very easy to get, by far the larger part of the necessary supplement to a diet of taro consists of fish. Both sexes are occupied for much of

Hunting

Hunting of land mammals is also zealously carried on, especially 224
the hunt for wild boars; this is normally done by means of dogs who [231]
track down the boar and hurl it to the ground or hold it until it is
stabbed to death. Also the flying dogs (bats) and a variety of cuscus
are hunted; particularly the first are killed in great quantities. 223●
Hunting for wild fowl is carried on only to a very limited degree.